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82 777 village culture: man must use human means toward human ends, and this is his first obligation not only to himself but to God.

156 In Vasilika, the same tension—the sense of a contest, of struggle, of
578 agony, of a kind of pushing and pulling—is also a feature of a large number
621 of encounters with other human beings. In earlier discussions I referred to the economic rivalries among families in the village and to the efforts to keep family activities private to the point where a kind of espionage is practiced by all the villagers to uncover secrets. These contests we may now understand as one manifestation of the agonistic quality of many human relationships within the village. But seemingly perpetual battles require an occasional respite; the nervous vitality which they drain must be replenished. In Vasilika, some relationships within [593] the family seem to contribute the respite and the energy to go on fighting the battles, whereas others appear to create the sense that perpetual struggle, principally outside the family, is a part of life. The family both starts the battle and also manufactures and distributes the weapons with which to fight it.

156 What is the ultimate aim of the battle, if I may continue the metaphor?
828 It would seem that each man and woman seeks for identity, for a concept of
571 self, and given the conditions of Greek village culture and its values, the
578 search is carried on by pitting oneself against another, or against fate. One learns to know oneself primarily by contrast with others; and therefore the maintenance of some difference is a necessity. Contrasts, and the tension contrasts create, become expected and desired. Without change and variation the villagers lose their sense of life. But the need to engage in perpetual struggle is an emotional burden, especially because there must be some who lose in the contests. A man is not completely disgraced in the villagers' view, however, if [558] he is bested in an encounter with another man, provided that he was willing to engage himself in the struggle in the first place and showed skill in his conduct of it. Just as agricultural failure is attributable to uncontrollable forces only [777] if a man did his physical best, so failure in human relations is attributable to some other force only if a man has first made a creditable effort. It would seem that it is not the outcome but the continuing *agbonia* that gives a village man or woman the feeling that he is a functioning human being, that he has an identity, that he is alive. "*Perazmena, ksebazmena*," "What is past is forgotten," the villagers say, and although they say so mostly in connection with unpleasantness, the saying is equally applicable to victories. For both victory and defeat are shortlived; a new area of battle constantly supersedes the old.

156 This struggle is not something which is entered into as a new pattern
828 when men and women take on the responsibilities of a family, after a child-
867 hood spent without it. On the contrary, Vasilika's culture is one of those in
858 which there is a continuity in the behavior and attitudes expected of children, adolescents, and adults. There are no sharp breaks; from their earliest days the upbringing of children plunges them into the role of agonist, and skills for functioning in this fashion are acquired in all stages of a child's development.

The villagers assume that intelligence and self-control are basic human qualities which differentiate men from animals. The villagers are in many ways

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committed humanists and assume that once these traits are developed each man will have the strength to face life and its *vasana* (trials and pains). Since they believe that children, by virtue of being human, have these traits inherently, the family's obligation lies in developing the traits to the point where the child, when he becomes an adult, can fend for himself. But until he is capable of independence in this regard he is especially vulnerable, and he is both subjected to the strains which parallel those he will have as an adult and also bolstered by the protective sheltering devices which supplement his own gradually developing abilities.

The process of caring for infants even during the first four months of their lives furnishes illustrations. Vasilika's infants are dressed in diapers and shirts and are than wrapped, with their legs straightened and their arms held down at their side, first in several blankets and then in swaddling bands. The result is a firm but not tight enclosure of the entire baby except for his neck and his head. Mothers explain that the swaddling is meant for the physical protection of the infant against cold and against objects which might hurt him. They also explain that only by restraint of the infant's random movements will he be able to grow straight legs and back.

But when one watches a mother wrap her infant and sees her make the sign of the cross three times with her fist over the baby before putting the swaddling bands on, and when one sees her make a spitting gesture three times toward the infant before placing on the swaddling band itself the blue bead that is supposed to protect against the evil eye, it becomes clear that the process of wrapping an infant is meant to provide a spiritually protective enclosure too.

Babies' helplessness makes them especially penetrable to the evil forces of human envy and under these circumstances external spiritual or even magical forces are believed to be necessary. Children up to adolescence are considered vulnerable, as we have seen, and this is expressed, among other ways, in the encouragement they get to participate in the formal religion of the village. They are brought to some church services as infants (except that both mother and infant are secluded at home and are specifically prohibited from entering the church for the first forty days after birth) and by the time they are three years old, children can stand quietly near an older member of their family through the entire two-hour Sunday liturgy. Parents encourage their children to join the young girls of the village in the Good Friday and Easter preparations as part of an expressed expectation that it will be good for their health. Fractious or complaining children, even when not ill, are thought to be suffering from the effects of the evil eye and may be taken to the priest for a special individual blessing to help dispel the influence.

As we have seen in connection with the blessing of a new house and its permanent sacred corner, God's protection and man's pleas for His grace continue as an accepted part of the life of the adults of the village. Here we may add briefly that this remains true even though adult men attend church services less frequently than women and ritual abstinences during Lent and similar formal requirements of the Greek Orthodox Church are not rigidly or systematically ad-

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156 hered to. Vasilika is a settlement in which there is some grumbling about, and
828 some disregard of, the formal requirements of the Church as an institution; but
771 God Himself, "*O papis apano*," "the grandfather above," as He is sometimes
● 867 affectionately called, is felt to be close, real, and not wholly inscrutable. He is an
[776] omnipresent force in the lives of men. Such phrases as "*Echi o theos*," "God
[821] has (the wherewithal to provide)," fall easily from the villagers' lips as does
the attribution to God, rather than to nature as an abstraction, of common physical
phenomena: "*Vrechi o theos*," "God is raining." The magical and spiritual
protection which is available for children, then, continues to be available to
adults but is considered less necessary and takes on a more formal religious guise.

Adult-Child Relationships

855 Let us return now to some of the strains that children are under. There
854 are, of course, the ordinary physical hazards of life in a village like Vasilika.
Children are kept from getting too close to the fires, to the oven, to other
peoples' dogs; they are protected from the harsh effects of the weather. In
addition, however, there are the hazards created by the behavior of other human
beings. A woman suckling her infant, for example, may let the baby almost start
to suck, then pull herself away, then let the child start again, then pull herself
away. She may repeat these actions three or four times, talking and laughing as
she does so, finally permitting the baby to suckle contentedly only after it has
exhibited some discomfort by whimpering or squirming within its swaddling
bands.

155 Such action is the beginning of a long series of similar teasing incidents
in early childhood, sometimes connected with food, sometimes with other
matters. A father of a two-year-old boy may call him over to have some of the
sweet preserve that is being served to guests. The child runs eagerly to his
father's knee. The father touches the spoonful of sweet to the child's mouth
and as the boy opens his mouth to take the food, the father snatches the spoon
away. He may repeat this several times until the child starts to cry. Then he lets
the child eat, and hugs and pats him telling him he is a good boy.

[865] In a different kind of situation, several boys of eighteen or nineteen en-
couraged the three-year-old brother of one of them to start a physical fight
with his equally small cousin. The older boys shouted encouragement and made
them intensify the pummeling of each other to the point where the children
were knocking each other down and bruising themselves on the stones and rough
earth of the yard. The little boys started to cry; the older boys laughed and
then, still laughing, took the children into their arms and hugged and kissed
[654] them, calling them by endearing names. On one occasion, when a government
[232] agricultural extension agent was in the village injecting chickens against New-
castle's disease, a father lifted his little two-year-old son into the air, turned
him upside down with the child's back facing the agent, and laughingly told

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the child that he would have the agent inject him just as if he were a chicken. The child started to cry, and after two or three minutes, his father righted the child and comforted him.

Sometimes adults use similar methods to discipline a child. On one occasion, a group of women were discussing the coming Easter festivities, and the two-year-old niece of one of them kept climbing on and off her aunt's lap. The child was told several times to sit still but ignored the request. Finally, her aunt laid the child on its back across her knees and laughingly told her they would kill her like the Easter lamb. The woman ran the edge of her hand over the child's throat to demonstrate the slitting of the lamb's throat. The others laughed and added vivid details. The child's eyes showed panic; she struggled up out of her aunt's lap and sat quietly on a stool for about fifteen minutes until they both left. We heard the aunt speaking gently and endearingly to the child as they departed.

As the foregoing examples indicate, when adults deliberately frighten children or even stimulate milder forms of distress, they do not abandon the child to his misery but try to relieve the anxiety by physical affection and soothing words. In spite of this, however, a three-year-old child will often try to hit a parent or elder brother or sister who is causing distress. He is laughed at for his futile efforts by those watching the scene. Four- and five-year-old children respond to the teasing by walking away or by maintaining stolid expressions. Once they do this, the severity and frequency of the teasing by elders decreases, and the pattern continues mostly among the children themselves in their relations with each other. Practical jokes continue on into adolescence. From the adults' point of view, the teasing is no longer amusing or valuable for discipline because the child has gained enough knowledge, enough intelligence to know that the process is a kind of game and has acquired the skill with which to handle his side of it. Mentally retarded individuals never learn, and they are baited and teased for the amusement of the watchers all their lives. From the child's point of view, the constant reassurance he receives after the pain may teach him that there is no real or permanent danger in the adult actions except that of ridicule, and that is what he learns to try to avoid.

Just as the teasing leads to a recognition that other people's actions and words should not be taken at face value, so does another common pattern of dealing with children—the pattern of deliberately lying to them. Usually, parents or older brothers and sisters lie to a child to get him to do what he does not want to do. For example, a three-year-old child may be asked to go into another room to fetch something. The child does not respond to several requests; his mother then tells him his father is in the other room and will give him candy if he goes. The child thinks he remembers that his father left for the fields early in the morning, and therefore is not likely to be in the next room; he makes a comment to this effect; his mother seriously reassures him that his father is really in the next room; he becomes uncertain and, finally, cautiously goes to the door, opens it slowly and looks inside. At this point his mother and anyone else around laugh at his look of chagrin.

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855 Lying to children as a kind of palliative occurs in less dramatic ways
865 as well. On one occasion, a mother was washing the legs of her two-year-old daughter. The child was standing on a table to be nearer the small water container hanging on the wall. When her mother finished, the girl did not want to come down off the table. She resisted, stamping her feet and calling for more water to play with. Her mother told her in a mild tone that there was no more water. This did not satisfy the child; she resisted further and finally the mother turned the spigot on and let her play with the water, of which there was quite a supply, for a few more minutes until the girl herself was ready to stop.

855 In both these instances the child easily detected the deceit of his elders.
867 However, since there are occasions on which his father actually is in the next room and does give him candy, and other occasions when the water actually has run out, a child cannot know in advance when he is being deceived and when he is not. Inconsistency in the actions of elders results in a wariness in [593] accepting or rejecting the statements of others, even within the family. Children may learn to love and respect their elders, but it is not required that they trust them completely.

577 Lying to children is one aspect of the general attitude toward truth and
867 falsity characteristic of the village's adults. In the village the word for lies, *psemata*, is used much more freely, with less emotional intensity, and with a milder pejorative connotation than Americans use the English word. "Let's tell 156 a few more lies and then go home," a man once remarked jovially near the end of a social evening. To accuse someone of mendacity is not the gross insult it is [578] in the United States; it may be meant as a statement of fact in a situation in which, in village expectation, it would not be unusual for a person to attempt some deception. As in the training of children, some form of deception as a means of achieving a particular good is acceptable as a technique for conducting one's affairs in the village or with outsiders. Each man and woman expects to develop skills both in the art of guilefulness and in the art of detecting guilefulness in others. Vasilika's villagers are not humiliated because someone tries to deceive them; they become angry only if the deception succeeds. In other words, if a person is gullible enough to have been misled, he gets angry at the deceiver for having made a fool of him, and this results in accusations and counter-accusations. The standard phrase for deceptions means literally "He has made a laughing stock of me," "*Me yelase*." Older children who have learned to turn the tables on their parents and try to deceive them are admired even as they are scolded. Certainly any child who, in mild ways, learns to take advantage of a neighbor or another villager is privately approved of by his parents as "*ponyiros*," "cleverly bad," although the neighbors use less ambivalent epithets.

156 The constant vigilance necessary to avert becoming a dupe is certainly
577 one of the sources of tension in the conduct of human relations in the village.
578 An American must not make the mistake of assuming, however, that these strains have the same effect on Vasilika's inhabitants that they would have on middle-class Americans whose training has included a stress on consistency and truthfulness. In Vasilika, the expectation of, and conditioning for, deceit does not

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eliminate the objective, realistic discomforts of living with somewhat unpredictable human beings, but the cultural expectation does seem to eliminate some of the intensity generated by the conflict.

The total situation does not result in an inability to predict the behavior of others to the point of chaos in human relationships, but rather in an expectation on the part of the villagers of a wide range of alternative actions and responses by others. There is uncertainty within set limits, but there is also an enjoyment of, and a taste for, the unpredictable. In a sense, when the villagers know each other so well that they can predict reactions with some precision, they are bored and look for other diversion.

Conversation and Argument

So far, teasing and deceptive acts have been stressed as elements in the contest of human relations. We may now turn to another type of weapon: conversation and argument. Students of Greek society and culture invariably mention the Greek's love of talk. The villagers of Vasilika are not different in this respect. Again, even infants become accustomed to a stream of conversation whenever others are around them, and they themselves are talked to and are assumed to make responses. When babies cry they are often said to be talking, "*Milai to moro*," and *milai* is the standard word for talk. If a baby hiccoughs, they say it is talking to someone who is absent, such as a maternal grandmother in another village. By listening to the talk around him, and by participating in it, the young child learns the functions of speech. In the village, children may be told to be quiet when they interrupt adult conversation, but this occurs only when the elders do not want to be interrupted. Children are not silenced on any general principle that they should be seen and not heard.

A child in the village quickly learns that some kinds of conversations communicate information, that others are merely a verbal accompaniment to activities, and still others are a form of recreation and part of the contest in human relations. Inside their homes children hear discussions of plans for the day and speculations about the weather and about neighbors. This kind of talk is a form of fairly direct transfer of thought and information. The child also learns that many ordinary, apparently routine activities are carried on to the accompaniment of a stream of comment and advice and that only a small proportion of what is said genuinely influences the person to whom the advice is given. For example, if neighbors are visiting with a woman who is about to place some loaves of bread in the oven, a discussion ensues as to what design to use for the slits in the top of the loaf, as to whether the bread has risen sufficiently, and as to whether the oven is hot enough. The housewife may have been baking bread every week or so for twenty years, but the discussion could easily give an outsider the impression that she was a novice. Agricultural decisions, such as on just how to place a few corn plants in amongst the rows of cotton, are discussed anew each year. Even at a baptism in Vasilika, the ceremony is punctuated by comments as to whether the baptismal water is too hot or too cold and as to how to wrap the

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521 dripping baby after his total immersion. Guests call out remarks about the way
571 the baby is being dressed; its bonnet strings, for example, are said to be too
867 tight or too long, and so on.

867 Such comment and advice on recurrent, apparently routine activities serves
[851] simultaneously to express and to reinforce a particular point of view—the point
461 of view that each event, no matter how often similar ones have occurred before,
512 is essentially fresh and unique (Miller 1950:16). In a sense, the villagers impose
521 variation and uncertainty on events which have no intrinsically adventurous elements.
571 What, from the villager's standpoint, is the monotonous regularity of ordinary tasks is relieved by verbal exploration of the range of small variations possible. Even when people are alone they apparently prefer to change the time, or the place, or the order in which they perform recurring activities. For example, a woman who sifts flour and kneads dough for bread varies the time of day at which she starts the process, the part of the household in which she does these jobs (sometimes in the ground-floor room, sometimes in the storehouse, and in different corners of these rooms), and the extent to which she completes the sifting at one sitting. Some of these variations are dictated by external conditions such as weather or the time available from work in the fields; but others appear to be efforts simply to alleviate the felt boredom of routine activities. The feeling of security which many Americans derive from the regular performance of routine tasks seems unknown in Vasilika.

861 The stream of comment and advice associated with ordinary activities is
521 very similar to the stream of orders and requests directed at children by their
571 elders. Children learn that they are often not chastised for failing to respond immediately to a command such as "*Katse kala*," "Sit nicely," or "Be good." Moreover, they learn that specific commands to run errands or to stop playing in the mud will be repeated several times before a parent gets exasperated, and there will be other times at which the parent or older brother or sister is distracted by something else and will forget the command entirely. The tone of voice of the older person informs the child when an order is meant seriously, but, in the meantime, he responds to or ignores many orders about which his elders have a less firm conviction, and his reaction depends upon his mood of the moment. The elders' words may even include threats that the child will "eat wood," that is, "be beaten" if he does not behave, and a parent may go so far as to threaten to kill a child who misbehaves. But even these threats do not elicit immediate response. (In fact, children are very rarely beaten. Physical coercion consists of an occasional slap on the back of the head, and children may be shoved, or pulled by the ear in one direction or another). It seems, then, that [865] disobedience is not in and of itself considered a sign of disrespect to parents. In the villager's view, a child should listen to what his parents tell him because they are more intelligent, have better judgment, and have the child's welfare at heart. Very young children, the villagers believe, do not have sense enough to know this and so can scarcely be expected to respond without a bit of a push, and older children may be stubborn. Even *pisma* (stubbornness) is grudgingly admired in a child if he exercises it with moderation.

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Children do, of course, run many errands and do respond to many orders given them. The point here is that the process has some of the quality of capriciousness we have seen in other contexts.

The capriciousness of human relationships is also understandable in the context of the meaning of village talk and conversation. The situation is one in which a child, following the example of adults, learns the appropriate verbal statements and responses but understands that much real communication occurs through tones of voice, bodily movements, and an estimate of the particular qualities of the particular event, rather than through words alone.

Talk in Vasilika, which literally aims at inducing direct action by others, also serves as a means of asserting a degree of equality in all human relationships. Just as children listen to, but need not accept, advice from parents, and parents receive comments and advice from their children that they may or may not accept, so people in higher prestige positions feel free to give advice and make suggestions to people in lower positions and vice versa. Social workers who occasionally visit the village have no hesitation in directly suggesting to a village woman that she take off her kerchief or that she have her teeth fixed. Conversely, the villagers do not hesitate to tell the social worker that she ought to eat more because she is too thin. Doctor and patient, waiter and customer, priest and parishioner, government official and taxpayer will, on some occasions, engage in the ritual of advice-giving. This pattern of relations cuts across the respect for expertness, for the skills of the specialist discussed in an earlier chapter. The right to a certain give-and-take underlies all relationships and serves to keep each situation unique and each relationship one of equality on at least some level. In agonistic situations, it is one means of reverting to an acceptance of common humanity.

Conversational skills are directly a part of the contests in two ways. First, skill in oratory and argument gives one an edge in the contests. The aim of the discussion usually is not to arrive at a rationally based conclusion or to exchange information, but to display skill at allusions, verbal quips, and niceties of expression. *Kuvenda* (conversation) provides men and women with an opportunity to boast of their own and their family's achievements and gives men a special opportunity to display their political knowledge and interest and to engage in political argument. Conversation of this kind has some of the quality of an arena in which each man displays himself as an individual and waits for an audience response. People talk at each other rather than with each other.

Second, talk enters into the agonistic relation when people try to elicit information from others by their questions and comments, and the others conceal as much as possible by their answers. If one gives a piece of news to another, and the receiver can say, "*To ematba*," "I have already learned that," the receiver says it with a touch of pride and has scored a small point. The news of a serious accident to a member of one family will be divulged to other related families; unrelated families may pick up the information, but frequently do not pass it on, partially to avoid giving the original family undue prominence. The villagers acquire skill in extracting information by indirect means. One of their

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156 methods is to ask the same questions in different ways at different times, and an
828 outsider is often struck by the persistence with which such questioning on the
571 same issue is carried on over many months. Not to succeed in gathering a choice
bit of knowledge is no disgrace—the villagers keep trying and every man stays
on the alert to guard his secrets.

521 There are some kinds of verbal communication that are outside the realm
156 of agonistic relationships and in a sense provide a respite from them. These are
571 the ritual phrases, which constitute proper responses to frequently recurring com-
mon life situations.

576 Village manners require the use of a wide variety of greetings at meet-
ing and at parting. In addition to these, there are a large number of appropriate
set phrases for life crisis situations, large and small. For example, one says "*Kali*
eleftherya," "Good deliverance," to a pregnant woman, "May they live for you"
to a parent showing you a picture of his children, "May it pass for you" to an
ill person or to any member of his family, "To your health" to a person wearing
new clothes, and so on. "Many years" is the wish expressed to everyone on
saints' days. This list is far from complete, but illustrates the point that although
the phrases are formulaic and are most often used without conscious awareness of
their literal meanings, they are apotropaic in feeling. In other words, the villagers
have a vague sense that the phrases, which are good wishes, may succeed in ward-
ing off evil. Certainly the formulas also serve as an immediate expression of the
good intentions of the speaker toward another in a potentially stressful situation.

Transmission of Values

156 Some of the weapons used in agonistic relationships in the village and
828 some of the processes by which children acquire the necessary skills to use them
867 have been considered. It remains to complete the discussion of the kinds of
values and attitudes inculcated in children and to show the relationship of all the
foregoing to the question: Who are the actors in the contests of Vasilika, and
what are the social alignments which form the structural base of these human
relationships in the village?

156 If, as we have seen, obedience to elders is not a virtue which parents
828 stress to regulate the behavior of children, and if affection is interspersed with
867 ridicule so that children cannot depend completely on the parents' support, by
858 what mechanism do the villagers' children acquire the prevailing standards of
152 behavior? It has already been suggested that the villagers act as if they believed
that human beings, by virtue of their humanity, have brains. It may now be
added that they also believe that inherent in every child is a sense of integrity
which, in English, is best translated as shame. Parents do not feel that they have
to implant these traits in their children but expect to bring them to the surface
and to put to use qualities which the child already has within himself.² Each
child is believed to have rudimentary intelligence which will develop into rational

² I am indebted to Popie Mohring for this phrasing.

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judgment, not through formal academic education, but by a natural flowering of common sense based on ordinary experience. Small children who get too near the fire or run too long in the sun are not scolded for disobedience but are excused on the grounds that they do not yet know any better. "*Dhen gzeri*," they say, "He doesn't know." As children grow older, however, the same misbehavior is treated as a sign of unintelligence and accusations of stupidity may be flung at the child. "*Dhen ecbis myalo?*," "Don't you have a brain?" they say.

The quality of shame which the villagers want to emphasize in their children is an inner sense of embarrassment at the thought of improperly revealing oneself—either the physical self (modesty) or the inner emotional self. The words for shame, which cluster about the term *endropi*, are used in at least three different contexts. When children refuse to talk to strangers, and smaller ones literally hide behind a parent, the elders say as an excuse, "*Drepete*," "He is bashful." For young children to feel embarrassment at revealing themselves to strangers is proper in the villagers' view. As children grow older, girls are expected to be more modest than boys and shyness remains an excuse for females after it ceases to be one for males. The older women of the village, for example, find it difficult to join the men and visitors at a feast table; they prefer to eat in another room. They go into the *saloni* after their guests have finished eating and sit without speaking near the walls of the room. Villagers know that urban women do not have such reticences and they feel it necessary to make some excuse for their wives. "*Dreponde*," they say, "They are ashamed," and although modesty as applied to a refusal to eat with one's guests is no longer fashionable, neither is it considered a disgrace to the husband or children.

A second use of the word for shame occurs when children show lack of self-control at stages in their development when it is already expected of them. "*Min drepese?*" "Aren't you ashamed?" is often a reaction of elders to a child who is less cleanly or orderly by village standards than he should be. Excessive running or shouting, physical fights with other children, loud and prolonged vituperation, enjoyment of food which borders on gluttony—these are the kinds of actions greeted with the suggestion that the child is exhibiting to the world too much of his inner needs. It is not the existence of the need that is considered bad, but rather the inability to control its expression. If he cannot exercise sufficient control, the child is not utilizing his sense of shame as is proper; he is making an unseemly exhibition of himself.

Although shame is considered an internal individual emotion, the process by which the villagers reveal his sense of shame to a child includes exaggerating and parading before others any evidence of possible shamelessness. That is, children are not merely asked "*Min drepese?*" but the action they should not have engaged in is often made much of and enlarged so that whatever inner discomfort is inculcated is reinforced by invoking the ridicule of outsiders. On one of our returns to the village for a brief stay, I visited one of my friends and casually asked where her five-year-old daughter was. Her mother answered that the child was probably hiding because she had been scolded for getting mud splattered on her dress. Some time later, as I was leaving, the mother caught sight of the little girl trying to hide herself on a narrow window ledge as she peeked out to catch

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a glimpse of the stranger. Instead of ignoring the child's discomfort, the mother went over to her saying, in a sarcastic tone, "Why don't you come out and show the lady your beautiful clean dress?" As we reached the little girl, the mother pulled at the child's dress and said, "See, Mrs. Ernestine, how clean she is?" And she said to the child, "Are you afraid to show yourself?" The child squirmed on the window ledge, held her fist to her mouth, and stared at me through these proceedings. She said nothing.

When older children misbehaved, parents sometimes threatened to tell the schoolteacher what they had done, with the implication that they would be both disgraced and punished.

Shame continues as a noticeable attribute of women throughout their lives. But as boys get older, an effort is made to enhance another component of their internal behavior, their love of honor (*filotimo*). A man expresses his masculinity by his love of honor; it is a necessary component of his self-esteem or *amour propre*. In Vasilika, a man gives expression to his *filotimo* by his fulfillment of his obligations to his family and especially to his women, by his ability to participate adequately in the daily give-and-take with other men, and by his knowledge of appropriate behavior toward visitors and guests of higher social position. A particular incident will illustrate: During a conversation with a bank manager in his town office, we were interrupted by a villager who wanted to talk to the manager. The manager told him kindly that he was busy; at a second interruption by the same man, the manager said to the villager, "Please leave us alone; don't you see I have guests here; have you no *filotimo*?" The man left immediately and did not return. The official had appealed to the man's own self-esteem to influence a change in his behavior. Moreover, if he had had to reprimand the man more fully before foreigners, the manager and the culprit would both have lacked *filotimo* as Greeks.

Self-esteem is also maintained in the village by a tendency to attribute failures to some outer conditions rather than to any personal inadequacy. If anything goes wrong, a man is most likely to say he did not have the proper equipment to do the job, or he says, "*Poz na ksero egbo?*" "How was I to know?" or it is the fault of the government, or he has been deceived. Man's abilities, the villagers seem to believe, are always limited by the force of circumstances not entirely under his control—he has unexpected illnesses, he has more daughters than sons, rains come when crops need sun, governments establish regulations on matters in which he was not consulted; and since events such as these are part of the human condition, one or another of them is likely to be available for the explanation of any one man's shortcomings. "*O kakomiro*," "the ill-fated one," the villagers may say of a man even in connection with routine mishaps. It is an epithet used often in the village and represents a compassion which does not derogate from the *filotimo* of the person referred to and counter-balances, to some extent, the frequent ridicule of the behavior of others.

Just as in Vasilika the avoidance of self-blame does not have the connotation of irresponsibility, so self-praise does not have the connotation of boasting. It is, rather, a necessary part of the maintenance of self-esteem. A host praises the food he is serving as he offers it to a guest; he talks of the accomplishments

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of his children; he tells of his exploits in the town; and usually he is the hero of his own tales. And since this must be done without giving too much information away, the stories have some of the vagueness of fantasy. As the examples show, however, self-praise is likely to occur with visitors as a part of the process of establishing a basis for a relationship. It is the relative lack of such opportunity in a small village, where everyone knows everyone else, that accounts for some of the complaints of the villagers about the monotony of village life. As I said at the beginning of the chapter, a desire for chances to contrast oneself with others, to enter into new situations, seems to be a strong impetus to action among the villagers and, in fact, an important source of the enjoyment of life. The warmth and generosity with which strangers are welcomed—the rightly famous Greek hospitality—may perhaps be understood partly in these terms.

The foregoing examples are undramatic in contrast with the violent defense of his *filotimo* required of a man whose daughter or sister has been dishonored. They fail to indicate the startling sacrifices of resources and energies that entire families have made in Greece to give hospitality to strangers or to protect fugitives of one kind or another, or the courage and daring with which a man may commit himself to a hazardous enterprise to express his honor and his sense of manhood. Such expressions of *filotimo* have been reported again and again from various regions of Greece.

The pattern of life in Vasilika, however, permits few opportunities for such dramatic incidents. A hazardous enterprise for our villagers cannot be a dangerous voyage in a strong sea, but must be, for example, a change from cotton to melon cultivation with an awareness of the risk involved. But the lack of extravagant situations should not obscure the underlying current of *amour propre* which characterizes the villagers—whether it be the sense of shame or of honor. For it exists and is always evident in the sensitivity, the tension, which characterizes human relationships and makes so many encounters a possible source of hurt and ill-feeling, as well as a possible source of triumph and satisfaction.

Noncompetitive Social Groupings

It now becomes possible to analyze the social field of the villager's agonistic relationships. Although some degree of competition in human relations is always present, even if only in a mild, bantering form, there are some social groupings in which agonistic relations play a minor part. The most significant of these is the elementary family. The unity of family goals and the dependence of each person on the others in the family for the maintenance of self-esteem limit the extent to which the home can be a battleground, although a child acquires from the behavior and attitudes of his parents, brothers, and sisters toward him the skills with which to battle. The elementary family is not only the most important economic unit in Vasilika, it is also a unit of *filotimo* and *dropi* (honor and shame). Each individual's actions reflect on his parents and only to a slightly lesser extent on his brothers and sisters and therefore contribute to the family's self-esteem. Since, as has been suggested, one expression of individual *filotimo*

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one crop farming in most cases develops many economic and social difficulties. The peddlers of finished goods in the villages absorb a large part of the trade. Usually in exchange for their goods they get live poultry and eggs.

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The biological function. The morals are very strict in the village. In the grammar school the children are /22/ together but after the age of 15 one seldom finds boys and girls playing together. Only the close relatives have an approved right to dance with a girl or walk with her to the market. The boys get married at from 18-25 and the girls from 15 to 20 years of age. The period from 15 to 20 is spent by the girl in preparing her dowry. She is busy at the loom or in embroidery with the needle and thread. One of the desired qualities of the girl is to have her handmade stuff. The ultimate aim of the marriage is to have children. If it happens that she cannot have a child the first year of her married life then gossip will start in the village of her inability to bear a child. Just the way a farmer thinks about a cow not calving, so do the relatives and especially the father and mother-in-law. There is no limit as to the number of the children, as long as both husband and wife are healthy. The usual belief and excuse is, "God gave them and He will take care of them." Both young men and the young women are instructed as to their duties as fathers and mothers. Birth control has no place here. Nature takes care of it. The strongest of the children survive under the conditions that are available for living. Besides, to use any method of preventing birth to a child is thought to be an immoral act. Thus out of seven to eight children in a family about five survive up to the age of six and the rest /23/ die before then.

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Size of families. The size of families varies in Megali Vrisi. One finds the largest numbers among Caucasians and the smallest among Thracians. The Caucasians used to live in compound families and still they stick to this idea even though it was broken down due to the new method of distribution of land. Even today one finds as large as 25 members in the family and as low as 3 members in the family. The compound family makes farming

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Illegitimacy. During the 16 years of their settlement in this village no case of illegitimacy has occurred. Cases of this kind are ostracized and are looked upon as very immoral. The morals are very strict and their observance is mutual by both men and women.

Permanence of Marriage. Under the Greek Orthodox church it is hard to get any kind of divorce. No divorce has so far occurred in the village and seldom is there any chance for divorces. Since the women are pre-occupied the year around with house work, farm work and raising children there is not much time left to think /27/ about divorces. There was one case only that had an excuse that his wife could not bear any children. Since he was the only male in the family he thought the family name would disappear without any children. This was not a good excuse for a divorce so he had to live on with his wife.

Educational Function. The family life is the education function. Neither society or the government has much influence as the family traditions have on their children. The influence is so strong that even after marriage the son, according to the existing traditions, works for the father and carefully executes all his orders. The girls learn from their mothers embroidery work, cooking, baking, washing, weaving, spinning; and all those jobs that are expected from a grown up girl.

The different vocations which are taught in school in many countries, are here under the guidance of the mother and entirely under family supervision.

The son learns the art of manual work in the fields from his father. When very young he follows carefully his father and by the time he is 14 years old he knows more or less the routine side of farming.

The moral training of the children rests with the grandparents. They have more influence and more experience of moulding the lives of the children.

The grandfather with his numerous heroic stories starts to influence the life and the future of the boy. His climax ends

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8:Stephanides--18 I, Y-3 (ca. 1933-1939) 1941 EH1 Greece EH1
Megali Vrisi

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always with great courage, heroism and self sacrifice for a good cause.

It is perhaps this very thing that makes the life of a Greek young man happy when he is called to the army. His girl takes pride in him. This date of his call to the army is celebrated by the whole village with presents, drinks, and enthusiastic speeches.

He is taught by his grandparent to respect the oldest and value their advice. He never speaks to the old unless he is asked to, nor sits before them but always stands up for respect. In case he gets some scolding from the old, whether justifiable or unjustifiable, he has to accept it without any answer.

The girl is taught to be silent and blush before the old. She is taught to dress modestly and never hang around the water fountains. She is taught the virtue of beauty in woman is to keep her lips closed. It has become an accepted custom for both grandfather and grandmother to take pride in giving the right type of training to their grandchildren.

Educational Goals. It is the ambition of every family to educate their children especially their sons. /29/ Besides getting through the sixth grade their aim is to send them to the high school and then to the University. No father wants his son to become a farmer; he wants him to be a teacher, a doctor, a lawyer or an army man. The sacrifices that the parents and relatives undergo to give an education to the young of the family is tremendous. They sell their cows, their oxen and sometimes go into heavy debt in order to educate their children.

The expression of the parents is, "Let me eat bread and onion only, for the sake of the education of my son." The urge on the part of the relatives is very great for having someone in the family educated. They all share alike the burden without expecting repayment. Fathers think their profession has no future for their sons and try by all means to send them away for training in other occupations.

Young men who carry on their school work under such hard economic conditions find it very discouraging. Some of them

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leave school the second or third year and often with ill health. Two of the young men died from T. B. in Megali Vrissi. Both of them were in High School for two years.

Discipline. Besides the local school which plays /30/ a large part in discipline, the established morals of the village disciplines the youth. The part also of the grandparents and especially that of "Gerousia" is important. The most effective type and enforced one is through "Gerousia".

The stick at home and at school still has its blessings, since according to the philosophy of the villagers it came out of paradise. Even married men sometimes are subjected to this stick punishment by the parents without any complaint. The teacher keeps it on his desk and one corner of his office is filled with reserve sticks to use in case one breaks. When a teacher has 175 students of six grades, there is no time for explaining why and how, the stick enforces everything.

Political and Religious Training in the home. The political training is formed and reshaped in the coffee house. The convincing speakers and those that can read newspapers usually influence the rest. Coffee houses are places for recreation and the exchange of ideas, for forming political beliefs and for deciding important decisions for the community. Its function as a coffee drinking place is of minor importance.

The name does not mean very much to the average person who does not have experience of the coffee house. The number of coffee houses usually denotes the magnitude /31/ of the conflict groups and the amount of leisure time the farmers have. The coffee houses, besides being the place where one sips his coffee and plays his "tavli", are also centers for drinking from soft to strong alcoholic drinks. Quarrels, conflicts, political discussions and gambling take place in the coffee houses. With all these evils, still the coffee house is one of the best social centers, and centers where the common farmers exchange ideas and become aware of the current world political problems. It is the center

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East Foundation, which have recognized this, have been successful in their relations with Greeks and in the introduction of desirable changes. They realized that they had to use not impersonal scientists but people who were predominantly leaders, with scientific knowledge, people who were willing to go and live in the villages, and make the acquaintance of the peasants over coffee in coffee houses. And the villagers fell in with the proposals for new hygienic methods and child care and artificial insemination because they had respect for and faith in the man who made the proposals. And where schemes introduced in the name of self-interest did not succeed, those introduced in the name of the respected leader did. "For your sake" is a common sanction. The continuous presence of the leader is not, however, necessary once the personal loyalty is there. In recent years, foreign experts have made the mistake of operating mainly from Athens, living in hotels catering to foreigners, of moving in foreign circles, and making no personal contact with the Greeks, thus creating difficulties for themselves and raising obstacles to the effectiveness of their missions. Greek families receiving CARE parcels impersonally, make great efforts to attach a person to the name of the sender; they often write very personal letters, trying to send photographs of themselves, "so that you can see us". In Greece there are no political bosses, since a man's vote is too personal, too much bound by personal loyalty, to be swayed by self-interest. On the other hand, we do find demagogues, who by sheer oratory and force of personality can inspire loyalty to themselves, and thereby, to their ideas. If there are irregularities at the polls, they come about not through the selling of one's vote, but through an attempt to vote several times in an impassioned effort to ensure the election of the chosen candidate.

Greek ethical conduct is personal also. A plea in the name of humanity or of kindness is meaningless to most Greeks; and only recently, in Athens, which has been affected by foreign ideas, did a plea in the name of the suffering peasants find true response. An organization called Friends of the Village was formed, and the aid given is by specific persons to specific people or families, in terms of a personal relationship. A peasant woman, writing to such a "Friend" in Athens, accepts the gift with ease and gratitude saying: "You are now my sister, and your family is my family."

Americans, who excel in impersonal kindness, are always surprised to see their human, warm, generous Greek friends remain unmoved and unresponsive in the face of suffering strangers. Greeks, on the other hand, are surprised to see their kind American friends giving according to figures on a piece of paper, according to what they can afford. In giving, Greeks deprive themselves of the very necessities of life, impoverish and even bankrupt themselves; but they recognize their responsibility to give only where personal relations are involved.

This is also true where truthfulness, honesty, loyalty and obedience

577 are concerned. Greek parents are agreed that the principal thing to
 867 teach their children is to be honest and to tell the truth; but this,
 of course, means to be honest in their dealings with their parents and
 other relatives and all the friends of these, and with people who value
 them and trust them as persons. Honesty in abstraction is not a virtue,
 and may even be branded as foolishness. Loyalty also is never to
 577 something abstract, like the government, which is equated with
 671 impersonal law. Loyalty is to the Greek nation, to Greece, the mother
 619 of the people, to personified freedom, but not to "the Greeks" who
 are unknown. Profiteering and dealings on the black market were
 not considered bad, because they circumvented only impersonal law
 and showed disloyalty only to the government and to the unknown
 Greeks; actually they were good in terms of the family, to whom an
 individual owes his loyalty.

577 Responsibility is not social responsibility but family responsibility,
 602 or it might be extended to friends and to the village. With loyalty
 661 evoked only in personal relations, it follows that Greeks cannot be
 impartial in awarding jobs or distributing goods. To take care of
 one's own first, irrespective of merit or of an order of priority, is
 one's duty; it means fulfilling one's role. Yet impartiality, just because
 it is so difficult to maintain in the face of strong forces and temptations
 to "bend", and devotion to an abstract ideal of honesty, just because
 it is saintly, are highly admired in Greece—though perhaps not by
 the immediate relatives of the impartial man. Such people inspire
 what amounts to worship.

577 Co-operation in this framework is actually mutual aid, one person
 496 helping the other, or it is loyalty to the leader who initiates a co-
 operative undertaking, with men contributing their work for his
 sake, and women bringing gifts to him, which can be used incidentally
 for the undertaking.

867 Obedience is very important and is taught to a child almost from
 577 birth; but again, this is obedience within a structured whole, to the
 602 parents, older siblings, and to people who stand in this relationship;
 that is, to friends of the parents or of older relatives, or appropriately
 introduced older people. Authority comes only from place in this
 829 structured whole, and obedience is only to people. Government is
 671 not personal, and the law is external to the organic, structured whole.
 It is not the voice of Greece. There is therefore no obligation to obey
 the law; the guide to conduct here is expediency, and the ability to
 875 circumvent. Before the political centralization, there was obedience
 and lasting loyalty to the schoolteacher. Now he represents only the
 interfering authority of the government, and it is an accepted thing
 that the students should try to circumvent his authority in every way
 they can, playing tricks on him and otherwise treating him as an enemy,
 since he is outside of the web of their loyalties.

so that fragments will not lodge in his throat. The pediatricians urge⁸⁵³ against this practice. They also urge rigid scheduling of feedings. The behaviourist principles of child rearing fit into the value of firmness, the feeding schedule falls in with the training of fortitude, and is introduced in the name of self-discipline, as well as for giving the mother freedom, that is leisure and freedom from encroachment. Few mothers, however, fall in with these schedules.

Toilet training is not mentioned in the two current manuals on⁸⁶³ child care. Mothers report that they begin training for urination at five or six months. Training for the bowel movement does not come until the child can sit by himself. Help in learning how to speak is⁸⁵⁶ suggested and described at length, but none for walking. Greek⁸⁶⁸ mothers do encourage their children to walk, however, and a folk rhyme says that a baby, "lest it be shamed," takes to the wall and walks at seven months. The manuals devote much space to character⁸⁶⁷ training; obedience is taught first, almost from birth; it is the parents'⁸⁵⁵ task to mould the character of the child, to be firm and unyielding. Mothers are urged not to be indulgent or overprotective.

The manuals devote about a third of their space to illness and home⁸⁶³ care. Under illness are listed sleeplessness, enuresis, thumbsucking,⁸⁵³ night terror, lack of appetite. Enuresis is said to come from irritation of the urethra, thumbsucking to begin around the fifth month from irritation of the gums.

In recent years, mothers have been urged to spend more time with⁸⁵⁴ their babies and to do more things for them. Among the urban well-¹⁸²to-do this means that mothers are urged to bathe, feed, and suckle³⁶⁹ their babies themselves. For other groups, this would mean a displacement; the children are usually with the mother, working with her and sharing experience with her; but to give them her undivided attention she would have to change basic attitudes, the accepted place of the child within the family and his assumed share in all its functions; and she must reorient the entire system of roles within the family.

The mother apparently takes no delight in the naked baby, in⁸⁵⁴ touching its skin or watching its movements when freed from the swaddling cloth. Traditionally the baby, like the adult, is never naked.²⁹¹ The baby's bath is not a special occasion of delight. In her lullabies, the mother shows no delight in any part of the child. She speaks of the joys of gardens, flowers, herbs and trees, but most of all, she tells of the rich clothes and adornments she is ordering from strange lands. She dreams of her daughter's wedding and her son's education. To⁷⁸⁹ the visitor, the baby consists of arms and legs; she says, first making appropriate allowances for the evil eye: "How his arms and legs have grown!" The mother coos and signs to her baby and smiles a special smile; she kisses his hands, she holds him in her arms. She calls him "My little gold, my little angel, my little bird, my little love"; she uses no terms derived from the sense of taste, unless she is a refugee